



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
District of Maryland
Northern Division*

*Thomas M. DiBiagio
United States Attorney*

*Vickie E. LeDuc
Public Information Officer*

*6625 United States Courthouse
101 West Lombard Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201-2692*

*410-209-4800
TTY/TDD: 410-962-4462
410-209-4885
FAX 410-962-3091
Vickie.LeDuc@usdoj.gov*

July 16, 2003

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**FOR FURTHER
INFORMATION CONTACT
VICKIE LEDUC, AUSA
(410) 209-4885**

**GLENN DALE COUPLE INDICTED FOR MANUFACTURING
FRAUDULENT CREDIT CARDS AND BANK FRAUD**

BALTIMORE, Maryland - Thomas M. DiBiagio, United States Attorney for the District of Maryland, announced that Francis E. Fletcher, age 35, and Michele Anne Fletcher, age 30, of Glenn Dale, Maryland were indicted today for bank fraud, identity theft and credit card fraud.

The five-count indictment alleges that from about October, 2001 to April, 2003 the Fletchers engaged in an extensive scheme to possess credit card information of more than 40,000 people in order to manufacture fraudulent credit cards and driver's licenses. The Fletchers allegedly acquired more than 1,000 blank credit cards and possessed a variety of equipment used to manufacture fake credit cards, including an embossing/tipping machine, an identification/data machine, multiple desktop computers, scanners, as well as other computers and associated equipment. The fake credit cards bore account information drawn from account lists maintained by the Fletchers. The defendants are alleged to have purchased numerous items as a result of the scheme, including six televisions, various other computers and electronic equipment, and gift certificates worth as much as \$3,000. The Fletchers were captured on surveillance video making purchases with the counterfeit cards. The indictment seeks forfeiture of \$200,000 in assets, including the Fletchers' personal

residence, two Mercedes automobiles, a Lexus automobile, and a motorcycle.

If convicted, the defendants face sentences of up to 30 years in prison and a \$1,000,000 fine.

United States Attorney Thomas DiBiagio stated that “this indictment will bring to justice those who operated a large scale credit card manufacturing operation in which scores of victims are alleged to have had their credit information used and compromised, and where thousands more likely would have suffered the same fate, if not for the successful law enforcement investigation which led to this indictment. Our efforts here to prosecute the individuals involved and seize their assets demonstrates our Office’s unequivocal commitment to protecting the integrity and security of our citizens’ financial information.”

The arrest was the result of a criminal investigation which began after the Fletchers were videotaped in a Germantown store purchasing three Audiovox DVD players using a counterfeit VISA card in April of this year. During a search conducted on April 21, 2003 at the Fletchers’ residence, members of a joint task force consisting of Montgomery and Prince George’s County detectives and agents from the U.S. Secret Service discovered a virtual factory for making credit cards.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Donna C. Sanger and Bryan E. Foreman.